

REMARKS

Claims 24-34, 37-38, 40-47, 53 and 55-57 have been amended. Claims 23, 36, 48-51 and 58-60 have been canceled without prejudice. No claims have been added. With entry of this amendment claims 24-35, 37-38, 40-47 and 53-57 will be pending.

The Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of the canceled claims in a continuation application. In other words, the Applicant does not acquiesce to any of the rejections.

Claims 49-51 and 58-60 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 49-51 and 58-60 are canceled without prejudice. Therefore, this rejection is rendered moot.

Claims 55-57 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims. Each of these claims has been written in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, independent claims 55-57 are allowable.

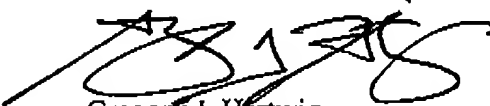
Claims 24-35 and 53-54 were amended to depend from allowable claim 55, and therefore are allowable. Claims 37-38 and 40-47 were amended to depend from allowable claim 56, and therefore are allowable. These dependent claims may also contain additional patentable subject matter for reasons not explicitly set forth herein.

Claims 23-29, 31-38, 40-51 and 53-54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,744,993 issued to Bisson ("Bisson"). Claim 30 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bisson in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,989,853 issued to Forkner ("Forkner"). With the above amendments, these rejections are moot.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, claims 24-35, 37-38, 40-47 and 53-57 are allowable. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 24-35, 37-38, 40-47 and 53-57 are respectfully requested. Should any issues remain, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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